

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 04878 100013Z

70

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 TRSE-00 SAJ-01
DODE-00 H-01 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00
/060 W

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O 092342Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1880

INFO ALL AMCONSUL CANADA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE OTTAWA 4878

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, CA

SUBJECT: PARLIAMENTARY REACTION TO AMBASSADOR'S SPEECH ON DEFENSE

1. SUMMARY: OPPOSITION MP CRITICIZED ON FLOOR OF COMMONS AMBASSADOR'S EXPRESSION OF HOPE FOR INCREASED CANADIAN DEFENSE SPENDING (DURING SPEECH IN HALIFAX DECEMBER 8), ARGUING THAT THIS WAS INTERNAL CANADIAN MATTER. IN RESPONSE TO PRESS INQUIRIES, EXTAFF IS STATING THAT THIS IS NOT FIRST TIME U.S. OFFICIALS HAD ADDRESSED ISSUE, AND THAT GOC CONSIDERS THAT SPEECH TAKEN AS A WHOLE WAS MODERATE AND WELL-BALANCED. END SUMMARY.

2. SPEAKING IN COMMONS ON DECEMBER 9, NDP MP ANDREW BREWIN ASSERTED THAT REMARKS OF AMBASSADOR MADE DURING SPEECH ON DEFENSE ISSUES (IN HALIFAX ON DECEMBER 8) TO EFFECT THAT CANADA'S ALLIES HOPE FOR GREATER GOC DEFENSE EXPENDITURES WERE OUT OF ORDER. BREWIN ASKED THAT ACTING DEFENSE MINISTER INFORM AMBASSADOR THAT CANADA IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CANADIAN DEFENSE AND THAT AMBASSADOR SHOULD FOCUS HIS CONCERN ON US DEFENSE. ACTING DEFENSE MINISTER REPLIED THAT EVERYONE, INCLUDING AMBASSADOR, KNOWS THAT CANADIANS HAVE EXCLUSIVE CONTROL OVER FORMULATION OF CANADIAN DEFENSE POLICY.

3. REACTION IN COMMONS TO THIS EXCHANGE WAS MIXED, THOUGH
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MOST MP'S REACTED ADVERSELY WHEN BREWIN SOUGHT TO HAVE

PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY FORMALLY CONVEY HIS VIEWS TO
AMBASSADOR.

4. SUBSEQUENTLY, EXTAFF USA DIVISION CHIEF SHARPE
INFORMED DCM THAT EXTAFF PRESS DIVISION HAD RECEIVED
INQUIRIES AS TO WHETHER THIS WAS FIRST TIME US AMBASSADOR
HAD COMMENTED ON CANADIAN DEFENSE POLICY. SHARPE SAID
PRESS SPOKESMAN HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO RESPOND AS
FOLLOWS: US OFFICIALS HAVE COMMENTED ON THIS SUBJECT
IN PAST, AND IN EXTAFF VIEW, SPEECH TAKEN AS A WHOLE WAS
MODERATE AND BALANCED PRESENTATION OF CURRENT PROBLEMS
OF ATLANTIC ALLIANCE DEFENSE.
ENDERS

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Message Attributes

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